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A
VINDICATION
OF
CONFORMITY
TO THE
LITURGY
Of the Church of
ENGLAND.

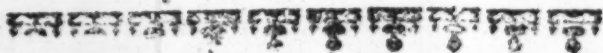
In a Letter,
Written to a *Person of Quality*,
wherein satisfaction is given to
certain Queries suggested by a
Non-Conformist.

T O R K,
Printed by *Stephen Bulkley* And
are to be sold by *Richard Lambert*, 1668.



Imprimatur,
Joh. Garthwait, *Reverendissimo in Christo Patri,*
ac Dom. Dom. Richardo
Archiepif. Eboracensi,
à Sacris Domesticis.

Datum, Episcopo-
Thorpæ, Feb.
19. 1668.





Queries of a Non-Conformist.

WHether our Lord and Master Jesus Christ, as he is God and Man, be not the sole, Supream Legislator to his Church and People in things concerning the worship of God; insomuch, that what ever externall exhibition of the Worship of God, as to the whole, or such part of it as was not in use in the Prophets, our Saviours, the Apostles dayes, nor for above three hundred years after our Lords Ascension, neither is any where in the sacred Scriptures appointed by our Lord & Masters command, or example to be used in Publick, and is so far from having his Royall

Stamp upon it, that as to some parts of it, it is plainly insufficient (considered as a means) to effect that which it is appointed for? whether such a Publick worship of God, with its Liturgie, and Rubrick, ought at all to be used in the Churches of Christ in these dayes of Reformation, or Restoration of Conformity?

2. whether the enjoyment of such a Publick worship, ut supra, with that strictness, that unless that worship be used, there must not be any other worship of God be used, be it never so Scripturall, and Orthodox? whether this be not a making this worship an Essentiall part of Gods worship, and an adding to Gods word, so solemnly forbidden in Deuteronomie, and Revelation?

3. whether if I assent, and consent to the use of that worship, Liturgie, and Rubrick? Whether I doe not so far set up an other Power in co-ordination to my Law-giver, and Judge, who is both God and Man? Tea, whether I doe not set

up another Power above Him, if I doe
as that Power enjoynes, rather omit, or
curtall that I know for certaine my Lord
and Master enjoynes, than leave one word
un-read of that manner of worship a For-
raigne Power enjoynes? whether thus do-
ing, is not such a pleasing of Man, as
declares I am no true servant of Jesus
Christ?

4. whether it be not a transgression
of my Commission given me by my Lord
and Masters own mouth, in Mat. 28. ult.
and penult? whether it be not in some
sence a bidding him keep his Gifts, and
Spirit he hath promised, keep them to him-
selfe, I am furnished with a manner of
worship which I can carry on, without his,
or his Spirits help, or any extraordinary
gift?

whether by Assenting, and Consenting,
ut supra, I doe not incurr the curse threat-
ned against Adding, or detraeing from
the word of God, and from the word of

that Prophet spoken of by Moses, and Paul ?

whether by Assenting, and Consenting, ut supra, I doe not recidivate from being a faithfull witnesß and Assertor of my Lord and Master his sole Supremacy, ut supra ? And whether I doe not hereby render my selfe plainly without excuse, when he, at that great day, shall say, who required the Exhibition of such a worship at thy hands ?

I in-



Good Madam,

I Intended, before this time, to have performed my promise to your Ladyship, in sending you a word or two concerning that Paper, which a Divine presented to your Mother. I told you at *Hornby Castle*, that much having been written by Learned Men of our *Church* concerning this Argument, (which it is supposed any Minister in this Nation, that desires cordially to imploy his Talents in his native Country to Gods glory, and his Country-mens advantage, will not neglect to peruse) the best course would be for a Person un-

satisfied, after the Reading of such Writings, (*Hookers Ecclesiasticall Politie, Arch-bishop Whitgifts Reply to the Admonition, Masons Sermon of Conformity, Bishop Sandersons Preface, &c.*) to debate matters calmly with some Divine of a contrary perswasion, especially with some Learned Bishop, who by verball conference may possibly give the dissenting person that satisfaction, which by Reading he cannot yet procure: If (till opportunity offer it selfe of better assistance) any weak endeavours of mine might contribute any thing to the settlement of this Gentleman, I should be very ready to communicate unto him the ground of my own submission

to

to the *Church Government* now established among us, and to hear him produce the Reasons of his dissatisfaction : If he shall be able by any convincing Arguments to prove, that our Church enjoyneth any thing contrary to the will of the Supreme *Legislator*, I hope that nothing that I enjoy at this time in it, shall be an impediment unto me of embracing his convictions, and bearing a part of that Cross, which many of his perswasion would have the world think, that they take upon them for the cause of Christ.

'Tis possible the Gentleman may have more to alledge in discourse, than he has expressed by writing; otherwise I much marvelle,

vaile, why he should think himselfe warranted to suspend his exercise of such gifts as God hath given him, and the pursuit of that high Calling, unto which I suppose him Legally advanced, by reason of the present settlement of our Church.

For first, (in reference to his first Querie) We all readily acknowledge our Lord Christ the Supreme, and sole *Law-giver* to his Church in all the *substantialls* of his worship and service : But yet we deny that it doth hence follow, that no *circumstances* of serving God are left to the Judgment of the present Church. The holy Scriptures are a sufficient rule of Faith, and manners ; and we

him. abhor that distinction of the *Pa-*
 s ex- *pists*, of the Word of God, into
 hath *Traditionall* and *Written*. We cheer-
 that fully beleeve all things necessary
 sup- for us to beleeve, and doe, to be
 by contained in those holy Books of
 ment the *Old* and *New Testament*, as ap-
 first pears by the sixth Article of our
 Church : And yet when God was
 now- pleased to afford us the succour of
 Su- supernaturall Revelation, in the
 his grand Mysteries of our salvation,
 of We do not beleeve that he forbad
 yet us the sober use of Reason ; the
 fol- giving a greater light was not in-
 ser- tended for the extinction of the
 dge- lesser, but to offer unto us the
 The help of Divine assistance, in things
 rule that naturall reason is altogether
 we blind in ; the eye of humane rea-
 ab- son

son is dimme in discerning *naturall* and *Morall* things ; altogether blind in *Divine*. We give therefore no licence at all unto reason, to contradict the revealed will of God in his Word. The sacred authority therefore of *supernaturall* truth being advanced to that pitch of unquestionable dignity, that where it speaks clearly, there no exceptions of Men, or Angels are permitted to interpose, and controule what is there spoken ; what should hinder a single Person as far as his liberty is not restrained by his Superiours ? much less a *Nationall Church* publicquely to manage the worship of God, after those *Methods*, which reason, assisted by Divine light shall judge most

most advantageous for the edifi-
 cation of Christian Assemblies ?
 Doth not our Saviour ask the
Jews, Why, even of themselves, they
did not judge what was right ? Luk.
 12. 57. And doth not St. Paul
 send us to the School of nature,
 to learne, what *baire* best becomes
 the *Masculine Sex* ? 1 Cor. 11. 14.
 What then, though there be nei-
 ther expresse precept, or example
 for that *Liturgie*, which is now im-
 posed upon the Ministers of the
Church of England, in the Writings
 of the *Apostles*, or *Prophets* ? Must
 we presently judge our conformity
 unto it unwarrantable, though no
 sound Reason can be confronted
 unto it, either in the *Bulk*, or in
 the *Parcels* ? What Argument can
 Reason

Reason produce, why the people lov
of God being assembled together, Olo
the *Priest* should not compose their Hy
thoughts to lowly *reverence*, and *Scr*
penitentiall devotion by some of the
those pertinent Sentences of Scri. star
ptures, wherewith our *Liturgy* be. offe
gins? What reason can be urged, tick
why an humble *Confession* imme. if h
diately following, a comfortable Fai
Absolution should not be pronoun. sson
ced by them, to whom the power not
of the *Keyes* is committed, and Hym
whose very *Orders* were given of M
them, with those words of our Sa. the
viour, *Receive thou the holy Ghost; Judge*
Whose sins thou remittest? &c. Can peop
well enlightned reason pleade any are a
just cause why a competent porti. To b
on of the *Psalmes* should not fol. fam
low

ple, low? and then *Lessons* out of the
 er, *Old and New Testaments*, with
 heir *Hymnes* between, either out of the
 and *Scriptures*, or conformable unto
 of them? The rehearfall of the *Cree-*
 cri- standing, one would think could
 be- offend no man, that sees every *Ar-*
 ged, ticle founded on Divine authority
 me- if he be resolved to stand to his
 able Faith. And the *Antiphones*, or *Re-*
 oun- sponses of the people, if they have
 iver not sufficient grounds from the
 and Hymns of *Moses*, and the Answer
 iven of *Miriam*, in the 15th. of *Exod.* and
 r Sa- the Song of *Deborah* and *Barak*
 host; *Judg.* 5. Nor the singing of the
 Can people by course, *Ezra* 3. 11. ye
 e any are as ancient as *Greg. Nazianzen*.
 port; To be sure, if the *Liturgy* of *Sain-*
 t fol- *James*, *St. Basil*, and *St. Chrysostom*
 low

should be granted to be spurious. Nay, *Pliny*, in that famous Letter of his to *Trajan*, saith, That the *Christians* did, *Carmen Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem* : that is, Sing an Hymn to Christ, as a God, by course. This could not be long after *St. Johns* time, for he lived (as *St. Hierom* writes) to the Reigne of *Trajan*. *St. Basil* the great lived in the fourth Century, about the 70th. year ; and he mentions a Method of devotion, consisting of alternate Versicles, as appears by his 63. Epistle to the Church of *Neocesarea* ; The people (saith he) with us, riseth betimes, after night, to the house of Prayer, and making Confession to God with pains, and tribulations, and distresse of tears ; at length, rising

rising from Prayers, fall to Singing of Psalmes ; καὶ νῦν μὲν διχὰ διαμεμερόμεναι, ἀντι-
 φάλλουσιν ἀλλήλοις, ὅμοῦ μὲν τὴν μελέτην τῶν λόγων
 αὐτοῦ θειῶν κρατύνοντες ὅμοῦ δὲ καὶ τὴν περιστολὴν καὶ τὴν
 ἐπιμετῶσιν τῶν καρδιῶν ἑαυτοῖς διακονήσαντες ;
 that is, *And now being divided into*
two parts, they Sing by course, an-
swering one another, thereby both cor-
roborating the meditation of the Di-
vine Oracles, and administering to
themselves attention, and undistracted
vigilancy of heart.

And that this was no private
Institution of his own Church, ap-
 pears from what he presently sub-
 joynes in the same Epistle, *If for*
this cause (saith he) *ye forsake us, ye*
will, together with us, forsake the
Egyptians, ye will forsake the inha-
bitants of both the Libia's, the The-

bans, Palestines, Arabians, Phœnicians, Syrians, and those that live upon the River Euphrates, and in a word all, amongst whom watching, and supplications, and common Psalmody are in request. If it be urged, that none of these things were in use before three hundred years after our Lords Ascension, the contrary appeareth from the fore-mentioned *Epistle of Pliny*; and moreover, it may be replied, that some of them were in use more than three times 300. years before his birth; for the 92. *Psalme* is a set forme appointed for the *Sabbath* day, as it appears by the *Title*; and how well our Saviour, that had the Spirit without measure, approved those Formes, to which the Syna-

Synagogue was accustomed, may
 appeare, by his use of them in his
 Agony, and Passion. For he was
 pleased to expresse himselfe twice
 in the words of two *Psalmes*, as is
 evident, by comparing the 22. *Pf.*
ver. 1. with the 27. of *St. Mar.*
ver. 46. and the 31. *Psalme*, *ver.* 5.
 with *St. Luke* 23. *ver.* 46. so that
 our late *Annotator* on the *Psalmes*
 hath duly hence inferred, *That no*
Tongue of Men, or Angels, can in-
vent a greater heighth of Encomium,
to set out the honour of any Writing,
or give us more reason to lay up in our
minds the words of the Martyr Hip-
politus, That in the dayes of Anti-
Christ, λειτουργία σβεδιήσεται, ψαλμοδία, πανδη-
 σεται, ἀναγνουςις πάντων γραμμάτων ἐκ ἐπιστακωδιήσεται :
 that is, *Liturgie shall be extinguished,*

Psalmody shall cease, Reading of the Scriptures shall not be heard. In which three, as the publick Service of God, was by the Ancients thought to consist; so the destroying of all, and each of them, must needs be a branch, if not the whole body of Anti-Christi-
anism, a direct contradiction to Christ, who by his prescription, or practice of each of these, imprest a sacred Character on each. See Dr. Hammonds Preface on the Psalmes.

By this it appears how remote from Truth that speech of the *Querist* is, That our Liturgie is so farr from having our Lords Royall Stamp upon it, that it is plainly insufficient, (considered as a means) to effect that for which it is appointed. For the designs of the Liturgie are to car-

ry on the worship of God, by prescribing set *Formes of Prayſes, Thankſgivings, and Celebration of the Sacraments, &c.* in ſuch a decent method of devotion, as may become the ſolemn Worſhip of that great God, to whom no ſervice is to be preſented, but that which is reaſonable : The repreſentative body of the Church of England, hath thought this *Liturgie* now enjoyned, ſuitable to theſe ends ; if any particular member think otherwiſe, *Reaſons* ſhould be alledged, not *bold aſſertions Dictator-like* concluded.

What the *Querist* means, when he asketh *Whether ſuch a Publick Worſhip of God, with 'its Liturgie, and Rubrick, ought at all to be uſed*

*in the Churches of Christ in these
 dayes of Reformation, or Restoration
 of Conformity, I can scarce under-
 stand. The Liturgie is the same, in
 effect, that it was at the first Re-
 formation, that happily was
 brought to pass by the pious en-
 deavours of our Ancestors, in King
 Henry the 8th. King Edward the
 6th. and Queen Elizabeths dayes ;
 If any thing contrary to Gods
 Word, and disagreeable to the
 Judgement of the Church Uni-
 versall be delivered, and enjoyned
 to be assented, and consented un-
 to in the Bulk of this Liturgie, 'tis
 not, I confess, fitting for dayes of
 Reformation, for it will carry 'its
 deformation manifestly in those im-
 posed corruptions. But because no
 par.*

particular instances are alledged, wherein the unsoundness of the *Liturgie* doth appear, I beleeve this to be nothing, but a rash surmise, voyd of all firme foundation, to pitch a foot on. The Book hath been sifted, and searched over, and over; and when the *Classieall Brethren* in Queen *Elizabeths* time, that were not so mad as to cast off all set Formes, opposed themselves against that Forme, that was Legally in force, that is, for substance, the Forme that is now Enacted amongst our selves, they were quickly convinced, that the fault was rather in their own *intemperate heate*, than in any errors reteined in the *Service Book*. They complained (foure *Classes* of them) to

the Lord *Burleigh*, ('tis possible, that *Assent*, and *Consent* were too hard meat for their *squeasie Stomachs*.) That Lord enquired, *Whether they would have all Liturgie taken away?* They said, *No*. He required them to make a better, that might take place, upon the removall of what was settled. The first *Classis* framed one, complying with the *Genevab Forme*. This the second disliked, and altered in 600. particulars. That again had the hard fortune to be quarrel'd by the third *Classis*: And what the third resolved on, by the fourth: And (as a Learned man saith) *The dissenting of those Brethren, as the division of Tongues at Babel, was a faire means for keep-*
ing

ing that ~~Forer~~ then, from advancing any higher. Vide, *Vindication of the Liturgie*, pag. 3. 4.

What the Gentleman means, by *dayes of Restoring Conformity*, I can but adventure to divine. I remember that there was a Clause in the beginning of the *Scotch Covenant* (illegally imposed by men in usurped power, and taken, rashly by the ignorant, because they thought it lawfull; and cowardly by the fearfull, that loved their integrity less than their temporall concernes) wherein the *Covenanter* engageth, *To endeavour the Reformation of the Church of England, and Ireland, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline, and Government, according to the Word of God, and the example*

ample of the best Reformed Church-
es. Perhaps the *Querist* hath some
 Church in his eye, unto which we
 cannot be conformable, whilst our
Liturgie shall stand in force; had
 he named that Church, we might
 have enquired, whether our Church
 hath not as good Reason, to be
exemplary to it, as to tread after it.
 They that have travel'd in this
 enquiry, will tell us, That they
 judge the Church of *England* to
 be the *Eldest Daughter* in all the
 boundaries of the *Reformation*, and
 as *Orthodox* for *Doctrin*e, and so-
 ber for *Discipline*, as any Church,
 since the first Ages. Mr. *Durel*,
 who was Minister above eight
 years in a Protestant Church of
France, will assure this *Querist*,
 That

*That in France, and Geneva, set
 Formes are enjoyed. That a Tigu-
 rine Minister was questioned at
 Geneva for officiating in the Ger-
 mane Church there, and not re-
 hearing (as 'tis appointed) the
 Creed, after the Morning Service.
 The same Person afore-named,
 now Minister of the French Church
 at the Savoy, relates a passage of
 a Letter sent to him, by the Learn-
 ed and eloquent Mounſier Martell;
 the words in English are these, I
 wonder to heare, that some are found
 in England, that are altogether a-
 verse from any set Formes of Li-
 turgie, to be observed generally one,
 and the same in all the Kingdome;
 among us, it is no where permitted,
 to reject the use of the Liturgie,
 which*

which was made by Calvin, &c. indeed for Calvins Liturgy, we leave it to those that like it. But his reasons for a Liturgie are so binding, that I know not what can be alledged more convincing. These are his words in our Tongue, which he Wrote in a Latine Epistle to the Protector of England in King Edward the sixth his dayes: As touching the Forme of Prayers, and Ceremonies of the Church, I approve very much, that it be Set ; and that it be not lawfull for the Ministers to recede from it in their Function, as well to help the simplicity, and unskilfulness of some, as that the Uniformity of all the severall Congregations may appeare : And finally that the desultory, and capricious

lightne

lightness of such as affect Novelties,
may be encountred, and stopped.

2. The Gentlemans second
Querie is, *Whether the Injunction of
that Worship, to the exclusion of all
els, unless that be used, be not to make
it an essentiall part of Gods Worship,
and an adding to Gods Word, forbid-
den in Deuteronomy, and the Reve-
lation ?*

To Preach Gods Word, and dis-
pence his Sacraments ; to make
Prayers, Supplications, and give
thanks for all men, are *Essentiall*
parts of Gods Worship. But to
performe these duties, after such
a manner, at such times, in such pla-
ces, in such Forms of words, and
with such Vestments, are but *cir-
cumstantialls*, left in the power of
the

the Church, by that generall rule of *St. Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 14. 10. *Let all things be done decently, and in order.* I would faine see this, or any other person, pretending the pleas here alledged, undertake the performance of the Service of God in such a *Scripturall* manner, that might secure him, against as strong exceptions, nay far stronger, than are here made against the *Publique Liturgy* by this *Querist*.

I suppose he would come into the Assembly clad with some garment or other. For (though *Saul* Prophesied naked; and the *Adamites* think it their perfection to appear at their Meetings *unapparelled*, yet) few are so *Fanatick* as to think those examples obliging others

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 Saul
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 ging
 hers

others to a conformity. He can-
 not approve a *Surplice*, perhaps ;
 May not another pleade as much
 against a *Gowne*, or *Cloak*, or *Cas-
 sock* : If a white Surplice be no
 where commanded, neither is a
 black Gowne ; If not to kneele
 at the Communion, neither to sit,
 or stand, is a precept in the sa-
 cred Text. If the established Or-
 ders of the Church are not to be
 received, because they are no
 where commanded by expresse in-
 junction of Scriptures ; the Non-
 conformists to the Church must
 permit us, to be such to them-
 selves, untill they can act upon
 the warrant of that Word,
 which they say gives no allowance
 to us.

But let us heare how the Service of God must be carried on when the Congregation is met ; Although the Common Prayers may not be used, perhaps because a Forme ; perhaps because commanded ; yet I suppose the Que-rist would pray after his own fashion. If the Service be a Forme, such will be his to those that are to joyne with him : And if it be urged, that by the contrivance of his Forme, his gifts are exercised : May I not reply, that ~~these~~^{so} are the gifts of the Church in the Prayers authorized by our Governours. The Church forbids no man the imployment of his Talents. At their Ordination, all Ministers are very powerfully exhorted there-
unto.

unto. But we have a cleare Text,
 That *the Spirits of the Prophets,*
 ought to be *subject to the Prophets,*
 1 Cor. 14. 32. That we ought to
obey them that have the rule over us,
 Heb. 13. 17. That all things
 ought to be done *decently,* and in
order, and common sense teacheth
 us, that where there is no subje-
 ction, there can be no order. 'Tis
 certain also, that the *Canon* of the
 Scriptures is sealed, that no man
 can pretend to such speciall Reve-
 lations, that what he shall utter,
 must conclude the Church as
 powerfully as if the Prophets, or
 Apostles spake. The best gifts in
 men, not exempted from carnall
 infirmities, may be abused. One
 may be zealous, and want know-
 ledge;

ledge ; another may be competently knowing, and want humility. *Ambition*, and *Covetousness*, and *Pride*, and *Rebellion* have stained the gifts of many, in our late remembrance, that might otherwise have done (though not so much service to the Church as themselves supposed) yet less mischief than through their mis-employment she hath sustained. By reason of these defects, what hath our Church suffered ? whilst one was for a *Classis* ; Another for a gathered *Congregation* ; A third against *Pædobaptisme* ; A fourth against *Monarchy*, and yet all (would we credit them) for *Christ*. When these had Preached their severall *Sentiments*, they concluded their

their Harangues with Prayers agreeable to their respective judgments ; and the Auditors that heard them must either with their *Amen* to such wild *devotions*, seal *contradictions*, or stand upon their guard, to pick and choose, where to joyne *issne* with those incoherent *ejaculations*, which (in defiance of all Authority of the ancient Church) must be obtruded upon the world, as the *Dictates* of the holy Ghost.

But 'tis alledged, That to enjoin a set *Forme*, so as not to suffer any parts of Gods worship to be carryed on without it, though never so Scripturall, seems to make an addition to Gods Word, forbidden in *Deut.* and the *Rev.* nothing less.

For here 'tis to be noted, that some things are absolutely good, as, *the Love of God, and our Neighbour, the believing of the Articles of the Christian Faith, praying to, and praying of God, &c.* And then, some things are absolutely sinfull, and wicked; as, *all the violations of the Moral Law, and the discredit of any thing commended to our beliefe, under paine of damnation.* But then, some things are of an indifferent, and middle nature, neither of themselves obliging us to the use, or refusall of them; but are left unto us, under our Christian Liberty, to be either *forborne, or imployed*, as our selves shall think fitting, under no restrictions, till our Superiours limit us, but that of
the

the Apostle, *Whether ye eat or drinke, doe all to the glory of God ; And let us follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edifie another,* 1 Cor. 10. 31. Rom. 14. 19. of this kind are the words, wherein we present our supplications to God, the *time* when, (the Lords day excepted,) and the *place* where, the *Garments*, in which we Pray unto him : Which *circumstances* when the *Church* determineth, she is far from intending to make any addition to the sacred Oracles of Gods Word, or from straightening that liberty, wherewith *Christ* hath made us free. For first, The Church of *England* hath no such opinion (as some of the *Romanists*

have of the Orders of some of their Saints) touching any constitutions that she maketh concerning the regulating of Gods Worship ; she placeth no necessity in them : Indeed she judgeth, that when such Laws are made, they ought to be obeyed upon the *obligation* of the fifth *Commandement*. But that *obligation* springs not from the *immediate Law-giver*, but from the *Ordinance* of him, that hath commanded us to submit our selves to every Ordinance of Man, for the Lords sake. For even after her determination, the Church supposeth the indifferency that was before, still to continue, in respect of the things themselves ; onely in respect of use, and so farr,

as concerns us, we are under restraint ; but yet not so, that the violation of such Laws, when it falleth to be committed upon some sudden emergency, is esteem- ed a sin like the breach of Gods Laws, so long, as it is without wantonness, scandall, and con- tempt.

2. The Church conceiveth her selfe not so bound to keep any Rites, or Ceremonies established, but that upon due motives, she may alter them as she pleaseth, prescribing to no other Church, what they should doe, but permit- ting unto them, in this behalfe, the liberty that her selfe taketh. If upon this ground, it should be inferred, Why are such Ceremo-

nies of which the Church declar-
 eth her judgement to be, that in
 themselves they are indifferent,
 pressed so *indissensably*, that he that
 will not assent, and consent to the
 use of them, must not be suffered
 to use another manner of Wor-
 ship, which he conceives more *Scripturall*? We answer, That it apper-
 tains not to private men to judge
 what Publick Worship is most
Scripturall, but to the *Governors* of
 the Church; and they think, that
 the *Liturgy* established is as *Scripturall*
 a Worship, as any that can
 be contested against it: If the
 Scriptures had appointed, with
 what words, and after what ex-
 press Forme, the whole Service of
 the Church should have been ma-
 naged,

naged, that method would have obliged all Christians; but such a Forme is no where extant in all the Book of God. Indeed there is a generall Rule, *That all things should be done decently, and in Order* : And a cleare Injunction, that we should *obey those that are over us in the Lord*, to whom it belongs to judge what in the publick Assemblies is decent, and orderly.

It may be this Querist would have every Minister of God in the Publique Service of the *Church*, proceed according to the measure of his *Talents*, which he supposeth may be husbanded to the edification of soules, far more advantageously, than the prescript Formes
can

can be, which being *known*, and
 alwayes the *same*, are apt to beget,
 or at least nourish in us *formality*,
oscitancy, and *dulness* in those ad-
 dresses, that should be *active*, and
vigorous, full of *affection*, and *holy*
zeale. I know such things have bin
 pleaded, but experience hath
 taught us, that neither set *Formes*
 doe necessarily beget those evill
 effects; nor doe the *arbitrary* con-
 ceptions of such Divines, as have
 thought fitting to renounce com-
 plyance with the rule enjoyned
 them, provide against them. We
 have no desire to reproach men;
 but if we had, might we not tell
 them, that the new methods of
 devotion which entred, upon the
 late *banishment* of the *Liturgie*,
 were

were so far from *spiritualizing* the people, that pertook of them; that if *Pride, Contention, Schisme, Rebellious contumacy against Governors, both Ecclesiasticall, and Civill; Oppression and Covetousness,* are works of the flesh, a more carnall generation of professors cannot be produced, I say, not since the Reformation, but scarce since Christianity, than those that have (upon pretence of *Carnality, & Formality*) deserted the *Communion* of the *Church of England*.

3. I hope upon consideration of what hath already been said, the *Querist* may easily perceive, that, by his *Assent* and *Consent* to the *Liturgy, &c.* he will not fall under the guilt of setting up a power

power in *co-ordination* to our great
Law-giver, who is God and Man ;
 much less need he feare, that here-
 by he shall advance a power above
 Christ. For the *Church of England*
 pretends to no infallible authori-
 ty over mens Consciences, she is
 farr from checking any thing ex-
 pressly commanded by the Spirit
 of Christ, in the Writings of the
Evangelists, and *Apostles*, onely by
 the help of that light, which she
 thence receiveth, she endeavour-
 eth to direct and assist all the chil-
 dren, within her *Communion*, in the
 most ready course of performing
 the duties there required ; and
 herein she recommendeth her pro-
 ceedings to the judgement of eve-
 ry mans Conscience, and hath re-
 ceived

great received no censure from any *Church*
 an; since the Reformation : Nay, so
 ere- far is she from incurring the cen-
 ove- sures of the rest of her *Sisters*, that
 land they rather emulate her *Beauty*.
 mori- We are assured, that the Reform-
 ne is ed Churches which follow the
 ex- Confession of *Ausburgh*, have the
 spirit very same, both *Government*, and
 the *Worship* in every particular that
 y by we have : Nay, they go farr beyond
 n the us in many things of the same
 our- kind, which our *Church* hath
 chil- thought fit to lay aside ; and yet,
 n the by a *Nationall Assembly* of the Re-
 ming- formed Churches of *France*, held at
 and *Charenton*, Anno 1631. are quitted
 pro- from the charge, either of *Idolatry*,
 eve- or *Superstition* in their publick wor-
 h re- ship. See *Durel*, pag. 4. so that, if
 eived the

the *Querist*, by his former expression, where he mentions, *the restoring of conformity*, would tax our Church with *Non-conformity* to the rest of the Reformation, because she retaineth a *Liturgie*, with a *Rubrick*; he is strangely mistaken, and knows not the *Methods* of their publick worship. For as the most of them have a subordination of Pastors, and admit not a parity in the Government of their Churches; so have they (as the cited Author attesteth) all of them set *Formes of Prayer*, not one excepted; he instanceth in the *Imperiall Towns*, and other *Free States*, as *Strasburgh, Ulm, Augsburg, Norenburch, Hamburg, Lubeck*, and in all the Territories of the

So-

effi. Sovereigne Princes of *Germany*,
 re- *Saxony*, *Brandenburg*, *Lawenburg*,
 our *Brunswick*, *Baden*, *Oussatch*, *Meck-*
 the *lenburg*, &c. so that the *Church* of
 ause *England*, by abolishing *Liturgie*,
 Rn. would be so farr from restoring
 ken, conformity with the best Reform-
 bods ed Churches, that she would be
 r as rather *Schismaticall*, by walking in
 rdi- a path by her selfe alone.

not 4. But the *Querist* would know,
 of Whether to *submit* to the *Forme*
 (as enjoyned, be not a transgression of
 l of his *Commission* given him, *Mat. 28.*
 not ult. & penult. The *Commission*
 the there given, was immediately pro-
 free per to the *Apostles*, who were to
 sus- be Christs *Witnesses* of what they
 ck, had heard, and seen, by *Preaching*
 the *repentance*, and *remission* of *sins*, in
 So- his

his Name, among all Nations, beginning at Ierusalem, Luke 24. 47, 48.
 so farr, as it extends to all inferiour orders of the Ministry, they may well think themselves concerned to fulfill so solemne a charge ; the words are, *Go ye therefore, and teach all Nations, Baptizing them, &c. Teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you, &c.* I cannot imagine how the Liturgie of the English Church checketh this Commission ; it no where prohibits the teaching of Christs Precepts : and if any in the Communion of our Nationall Church shall presume to teach any thing contrary unto them, I hope the care of our Spirituall Governours is so great, that he would no longer
 be

be permitted to proceed in sowing
 such tares, than he should be con-
 victed guilty of so foule a crime ;
 neither do the dutifull Sons of the
Church of England, bid Christ (as the
Querist pretends) *keep his gifts and*
spirit which he hath promised, to him-
self. Nay rather, when they observe
 the spirit of *wisdom* and *counsell*, so
 to have assisted the *Compilers* of the
Liturgy, that the exactest searchers
 into it, & disputers against it, have
 bin able (after all their heats) ra-
 ther passionately to *revile* it, than
 solidly to *confute* it ; they own
 Christs gracious succour in the il-
 lumination, and direction of those
 that framed it, and see that gene-
 rall promise verified in the refor-
 mation of this particular *Nationall*
 Church,

Church, in the very Text alledged by the *Querist*, *Lo I am with you alwaies, even to the end of the world.* And therefore the *Querist* may be secure, that his *Assenting* and *Consenting*, will never endanger him to incur the curse denounced against such as shall adde, or detract from the *Word of God.* For our Church doth not impose her *Liturgy* as immediately inspired, but contrived through the assistance of the *Spirit* indeed but by men, using the means of *Study*; and carefull enquiry after the truth, not challenging *Propheticall*, or *Apostolical infallibility.* Whereupon it will follow, that the complyer with this method of Worship, can in no reason be charged with *recidivation* from asserting Christs *supre-*

premacy; for the *Liturgy* controls
 no Law of Christ, nor challengeth
 any *submission* to the diminution of
 his *authority*; but directs us to make
 all our *addresses* to God the Father in
 his name, and glorifieth him as the Fa-
 ther, in the unity of the blessed Spirit,
 common to them both, teaching us, to
 ascribe honour, prayse, obedience,
 and adoration to the three Persons
 in the unity of the same essence, for
 ever and ever. He that disturbe^{urbeth}
 the settlement of so well an or-
 dered Church, may rather be afraid
 to incur the curse wished by the
 Apostle, upon the *disturbers* of the
 peace of the *Galatians*, I would they
 were even cut off that trouble you.
 Let a man search the *Liturgy*, and
 examine every parcell of it, I am

confident that he shall find no part of it contrary to sound reason, the *sacred Text*, or the usage and custome of the ancient Church : and then I think *St. Augustines* words may be worth the *Querists* consideration, *Contra rationem nemo sobrius, contra Scripturas nemo Christianus, contra Ecclesiam nemo pacificus senserit, de Trin. 4. 6.* no sober man will contradict reason, no Christian the Scriptures, no peaceable person the custome of the Church.

Good Madam, whether I have said enough to satisfie the Contriver of the *Queries*, I know not ; but I am confident, that I have said more than was requisite to satisfie your Ladyship, for you are
bet.

better Principled in the Religion
establiſh't amongst us, than to be
shaken by such *Proposals*, as the
Querist's Paper has offered to your
consideration.

Indeed, it seems strange to me,
that Persons (otherwise not voyd
of common sense) should so bungle
in disputes of this nature, as, with-
out any considerable force of Ar-
gument, to oppose, not onely the
practice of our own *Church*, and all
others of the *Reformation*, but to
slight the precedent of the *Catho-
lick Church*, throughout the *East*,
and *West*, for a long time before,
even impudence it self dare charge
them with *Superstition*, or *Idolatry*;
except God in his just judgement
has given them up unto a spirit of
de.

delusion: For it is very possible, that they, who upon secular designs, disturbed the settlement of our *Church*, whose prudent, and pious constitutions, their own subscriptions had sometimes justified, should deservedly be punished, either with so much blindness, as not to see what formerly they discerned; or with so much hardness of heart, as to refuse to comply with, what they can, with no solidity of reason, disapprove and censure. The piety and charity of your Ladyship make you zealous to win others to the same persuasion, which, upon, not onely the *authority* of our *Church*, but the *conviction* of your own discerning Judgement, you have embraced. I
heartily

heartily wish, that these, or any other endeavours of mine might contribute somewhat to the gaining of any *dissenters* to the bosome of that affectionate *Mother*, whom they have so deeply, by their *Apostasie*, disquieted, and grieved.

'Tis not, in my judgement, an *Act* of *comprehension*, that will effect this great work, that will but disparage the *Wisedome* and *gravity* of our pious *Mother*, and farther confirme such wanton Children (as resolve never to be confuted) in their *obstinate*, though groundless oppositions. It must be some *Act* of the *incomprehensible* goodness, and power of God, who is able both to illuminate the eyes of the *blind*, and discover unto them

them the path of *Truth*, and to order the *Footsteps* of the *perverse*, and guide them into the way of *Peace*.

Your Christian charity will incline you to implore Almighty God for such a mercy for them, and I shall cheerfully joyn with you in the same request. To this I shall, at this time, adde but one more (for a blessing upon your Ladyships Person, and Family) and without giving you any further trouble of Reading what has (long since) exceeded the measures of a Letter, rest,

Good Madam,

Your Ladiships humble
servant in Christ,
P. S.

Feb. 25.
1667.